



Congressman Tim Bishop

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BISHOP PUSHES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY FROM GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Backs Legislation to Require Oversight of Federal Agency Spending

WASHINGTON, DC—Congressman Tim Bishop is pushing for legislation requiring Congress to exercise its constitutional responsibility of executive-branch oversight. Bishop signed on to two tough measures that demand greater accountability from government agencies. One of the bills Bishop supports demands that cabinet secretaries face reconfirmation by the Senate if their agency cannot perform a clean audit.

“Congress has abdicated its oversight responsibilities, and this has led to billions of taxpayer dollars wasted or otherwise unaccounted for,” Bishop said. “Accountability and oversight should not be partisan issues, they are the foundation of Congress’ constitutional responsibility.”

In Fiscal Year 2004, the Treasury Department found that \$25 billion went unaccounted for. According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), in Fiscal Year, 2005, 19 of 24 federal agencies count not routinely produce reliable, useful and timely financial audit information. In a report, the GAO noted that, “continuing on this unsustainable path will gradually erode, if not suddenly damage, our economy, or standard of living, and ultimately our national security.”

This is why Bishop cosponsored H. Res. 841, legislation that mandates hearings when the GAO raises a red flag over an agency’s accounting practices. It also demands hearings within 60 days if an agency’s Inspector General report identifies waste, fraud, abuse or mismanagement of more than \$1 million. Bishop also sponsored HR 5315, The Accountability in Government Act of 2006, which requires cabinet secretaries to face reconfirmation by the Senate if their agency cannot perform a clean audit.

“This legislation is unfortunately necessary because the Republican majority in Congress has failed to hold this Administration’s political appointees accountable for wasting taxpayer dollars,” Bishop said.

Inspectors General in each federal agency complete regular reports identifying cases of fraud, waste and abuse within their agencies. However, their findings are often ignored by their own agencies and an Administration-compliant Congress. One example is from the Office of the Inspector General for the Department of Defense in its Performance and Accountability Report FY2005, which wrote, “We are unable to give an opinion on the Fiscal Year 2005 DoD financial statements because of limitations on the scope of our work. Thus, the financial statements may

be unreliable...Therefore, we are unable to express, and we do not express, an opinion on [DoD's] financial statements.”

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